



August 2003

The Blue Light

Alabama Department of Public Safety

New Troopers Hit the Road

Class 2003-A Graduates, Adding 26 New State Troopers to Highway Patrol Ranks

Col. W.M. Coppage
Director
Lt. Col. John Fisher
Assistant Director
Maj. Glenda Deese
Administrative Division
Maj. Ken Hallford
ABI Division
Maj. Roscoe Howell
Driver License Division
Maj. Patrick Manning
Highway Patrol Division
Maj. Cary Sutton
Service Division
Maj. Charles Andrews

With family, friends and their fellow Public Safety employees proudly looking on, the 26 members of Class 2003-A were sworn in as Alabama's newest state troopers.

In administering the oath of office, Col. Mike Coppage told the troopers they were making a "solemn pledge, not just repeating words. This is a pledge to the citizens and to yourself."

Graduation speaker Attorney General Bill Pryor thanked the troopers for "choosing public service," telling them, "your calling is noble."

During graduation Mark A. Stone received the Academic Award, Johnny L. Landingham received the Marksmanship Award, John T. Underwood received the Fitness Award, and Michael B. Wilson received the Pursuit/Highway Response Driving Award.

Phillip R. Faulkner received the Commander's Award.

Taking the oath of office in the



Alabama's newest state troopers at graduation.

family tradition were Tpr. Doug Huntley's brother, Alex; Lt. Wiley Jordan's son, Jeffrey; and Cpl. Tom Owens' son, Michael.

Coppage, Fisher Bring Experience, New Perspective to Public Safety

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Mike Coppage and John Fisher have forged a close professional and personal relationship in the last 20 years, working together first in tactical operations at the Birmingham Police Department and later in a variety of areas within BPD. They quickly recognized in each other a shared approach to and love of law enforcement.

According to Fisher, the two are "kindred spirits," and Coppage puts it this way: "We both love policing. It's what we live for."

Following their appointments by Gov. Bob Riley as director and assistant director, they now bring their combined talents and experience to work on be-



Maj. Patrick Manning, Gov. Bob Riley and Col. Mike Coppage at Talladega race.

half of the Alabama Department of Public Safety.

Coppage, who was serving as Birmingham police chief when Riley talked with him about joining his Cabinet, readily asserts that the challenge of directing DPS was compelling, as was the agency's reputation. "State

troopers are the premier agency in law enforcement," he says.

"Certainly anybody would want to be affiliated with this agency."

Fisher, who had retired from the Birmingham Police Department as deputy chief, says, "When this challenge was presented, I was flattered and, indeed, honored." ("He was bored," claims Coppage.)

Coppage says Riley's directive to him was to "do what needs to be done. The governor basically said, 'You've got a clean sheet of paper over there.'" And the first order of business for both

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Lorena and Moises: an AMBER success story.

AMBER Alert

ABI, Highway Patrol Key Components of New Child Protection Program

Montano, a Hispanic female, 32 years of age, brown hair and brown eyes, possibly in the company of her ex-husband, Jose A. Montano. They are possibly traveling in a light blue Infiniti, possible partial tag number J30 or tag number D1386K."

With this June 30 broadcast, DPS triggered Alabama's first AMBER alert, just 30 days after Gov. Bob Riley announced the new child protection program is ready for activation in Alabama.

As a result of the AMBER broadcast, both children were recovered at a motel near Interstate 10 in the Florida panhandle within 18 hours of activation. A motorist in Florida notified authorities after seeing the alert on an electronic highway sign and spotting a vehicle which matched the description. Authorities believe the abductor may have intended to travel to Texas, driving through Alabama en route.

By mid-July, AMBER had been activated twice more, and DPS anticipates increasing use of the system.

AMBER Alert is a voluntary partnership among law enforcement agencies and broadcasters to protect Alabama's children. The system activates an urgent bulletin in the most serious child abduction cases. When the system is activated, radio stations interrupt programming to announce the alert, and television and cable systems run a "crawl" across the screen.

ABI Cpl. Karl Youngblood, Alabama's AMBER coordinator, said the first activation "gave us a chance to see how the system works, in the absence of an abduction that was closer to home."

Subsequently, Lt. Col. John Fisher established an AMBER

"working group" to critique each activation, assess strengths and weaknesses, and identify ways to improve the program.

In addition to ABI, staff from the Highway Patrol, Driver Li-



cense and Administrative divisions are working on the AMBER initiative.

DPS coordinates AMBER and is responsible for triggering alerts and for securing the involvement of and training law enforcement agencies. Other key partners are the Alabama Broadcasters Association and BellSouth.

Coppage, Fisher, continued from page 1

"State troopers are the premier agency in law enforcement.

Employees are our No. 1 strength by far."

Col. Mike Coppage

colonels has been learning the department.

"Learning is the most difficult part," says Fisher, citing in particular the challenges of discovering "how to get things done

within the bureaucracy of state government." Coppage tells of informing department members from the start: "The good news is that we don't know anybody." He believes his "outsider" perspective has allowed him to listen objectively to a variety of viewpoints and then form his own opinions. "We're trying to learn the individuals and personality of the organization, and we're still learning," says Coppage.

Fisher says they have experienced "minimal" reluctance among DPS members and that "people have stepped up, extended a hand of welcome and

assisted above and beyond the call of duty. That's a testimony to the caliber of people here and their professionalism."

Coppage says DPS's employees are the agency's "No. 1 strength, by far," and lists personnel as his No. 1 priority. He is intent on communicating to employees their immense value to the department, and that he and Fisher care about them and the jobs they perform. Coppage also emphasizes the common heritage among those who work in law enforcement. "We've been there, done that, still have the T-shirt," he says. "We'll never

ask you to do something we haven't done."

Coppage and Fisher also are working to inform the public, as well as elected leaders, what the department does and how its employees serve the state. They believe DPS can garner increased support in all areas by using its talents, expertise and limited resources as effectively as possible. "We're trying to raise the bar," says Coppage, through more funding, better facilities, increased accountability, and building on the department's pride, honor and professionalism.



From the Southeast to the Middle East

ABI Sgt. James Roberts and Son, Joseph, Serve on Two Fronts

By SFC Charles R. Evans
87th Division (Training Support)
Public Affairs

When Reservist SFC James A. Roberts received activation orders and learned that he would spend several days in-processing at Fort Benning, Ga., one of the first things he did was call his son.

"Whatcha' doing, son?" Roberts asked.

"Cleaning up an old barracks for some incoming reservists," the younger Roberts answered.

"Appreciate that son . . . we'll be there in a few days," replied the father.

The elder Roberts is a physical security specialist with HHC, 87th Division (Training Support), Birmingham, which mobilized several dozen reservists in late January. His son is PVT Joseph O. Roberts, an infantryman with Company B, 1/30th,

3rd Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division located on Kelly Hill, Fort Benning.

Joseph Roberts had just graduated from infantry AIT at Fort Benning in mid-December. He was assigned to the 3rd ID element on Kelly Hill, which was then in the process of deploying to the Persian Gulf region. Joseph was attached to the trail party loading out vehicles and cleaning up after the initial movement.

Joseph's delayed departure would prove happily fateful, as it would allow father and son to spend precious hours together before going their separate ways in the service of their country. James would return to Birmingham following mobilization in-processing at Fort Benning, and Joseph would likely be involved in combat operations overseas in a matter of weeks.



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The Robertses, Joseph and James, together at Fort Benning.



DPS Salutes Personnel Called to Active Military Duty

The Department of Public Safety salutes its active-duty personnel serving in our nation's military. The include:

Sgt. James Roberts
 Tpr. Daryl Thistle
 Tpr. Chris Ellis
 Tpr. Curtis Summerville
 Accountant Pamela Henderson
 Tpr. Curtis Coachman
 Sgt. Hugh Stinson
 Tpr. Stanley Talley
 DL Examiner Tamera Thomas
 ASA I Yolanda Smith
 Tpr. Gregory Grimes
 Tpr. Robert Till

Tpr. Kevin Cole
 Tpr. Byron Piggott
 Tpr. Thomas Lolley
 Tpr. David Love
 Tpr. Gregory Estes
 Tpr. Gary Hetzel
 Tpr. Willie Locke
 Tpr. Joseph Penton
 Tpr. Eugene Mattox
 Tpr. Glenn Furukawa
 Tpr. Michael Gillis
 Cpl. Kevin Ingalls
 Tpr. David McGowan
 Tpr. Angel Rodriguez
 Tpr. Michael Colburn
 PCO Teresa Fikes

Tpr. Larry Harkless
 Tpr. Eric Bryant
 Tpr. Terry Greer
 Tpr. Anthony Hathcock
 Tpr. Robert Fisher
 Tpr. Joseph Bennett
 Tpr. Darryl Zuckelli
 Tpr. Michael Britton
 Tpr. Terry King
 Tpr. Michael Hickerson
 Tpr. James Boykin
 Cpl. Teddy Fain
 Cpl. Kent Donaldson
 Tpr. Christopher Barnes
 Sgt. Ricky Peak

Tpr. Nichols Remembered

Law Enforcement Memorial Ceremony Honors Alabama's Fallen Officers

By Cpl. Spencer Collier
PI/E, Mobile



Tpr. Gene Wiggins accompanies Mrs. Brian Nichols as she places a flower on the memorial display in memory of her husband.

On April 2, law enforcement officers from throughout the state gathered on the grounds of the state Capitol to honor those fallen officers from the previous year. The Police Officer Memorial statue was a fitting backdrop for the event. The state lodge of the Alabama Fraternal Order of Police hosted the annual law enforcement memorial.

Among those honored posthumously was Tpr. Brian Nichols. Tpr. Nichols passed away in the line of duty on Feb. 17, 2002, in an automobile accident. Tpr. Nichols' wife, Denise, was present at the memorial. Denise placed a flower on the Fraternal Order of Police wreath, signifying Brian's sacrifice to citizens of this great state. Tpr. Nichols' father and mother, Mr. And Mrs.

Willie Nichols, also attended the memorial. Willie is a retired Alabama state trooper.

Gov. Bob Riley and Lt. Gov. Lucy Baxley spoke at the memorial. Both thanked Denise and the families of the other fallen officers for their sacrifice. Lt. Gov. Baxley noted that law enforcement is a family, and she reminded everyone that police officers continuously give of themselves and receive little in return. Col. Mike Coppage and Lt. Col. John Fisher also attended the event.

Romans Chapter 14, Verse 8, was chosen to be read at the memorial to symbolize Brian's



Honor Guard takes part in memorial ceremony.

life. The verse reads, "For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's." Anyone who knew Tpr. Brian Nichols, knew his commitment to his faith and family, and this verse was a fitting memorial to his life.



Roberts, continued from page 3

*"I think I might like
to get into law
enforcement, like
Dad."*

PVT Joseph Roberts

Their convergence at Fort Benning was entirely unexpected.

"You can't plan something like this," said James. "I wouldn't trade this time for anything."

The two soldiers took every opportunity to meet between formations, eat together at the dining facility, and relax during off-duty hours.

One topic of discussion between them was Joseph's experience as a new private in the Army.

"The training was tougher than I expected," the young soldier said. "Dad had told me a lot about the military, but it's been a long time since he was a private."

James joined the Army in 1972, and served four years on active duty. Following a break in service, he joined the Alabama National Guard in 1987, and spent nine years as a guardsman. For the past six years he has been a reservist with the 87th Division (Training Support).

While not anxious to leave family again, the younger Roberts expressed eagerness to get on with the mission he trained for.

"I've been on Kelly Hill for about a month. I like Fort Benning, but I don't enjoy cleaning barracks. I'm ready to do my job!" he said.

"With the good training we've had, I'm sure we'll be ready to take on whatever missions

we're called to do. The 3rd ID seems like a real squared-away unit," he added.

When asked about future plans after deployment, the younger Roberts said, "I think I might like to get into law enforcement, like Dad."

As a civilian, James is a sergeant with the Alabama Bureau of Investigation.

"Old Dad would really like to see him attend college," James responded. "He's been paying into the college fund since he came into the Army."

"I just hope this whole experience will make me a better person," said Joseph.

"It will," Dad affirmed.

Taking Charge ...

Driver License Now Accepting Visa, MasterCard, Expands DL Services

Driver License is making it easier for the public to gain access to division services in two significant ways. First, DL now accepts Visa and MasterCard; and second, services for reinstatement, driver records and crash reports have been expanded to additional offices throughout the state.

"Our goal is to make essential driver license services more

accessible to and convenient for the public," said Col. Mike Coppage.

Walk-in driver license customers now may seek to have a driver license reinstated and obtain copies of crash reports and driver records in Jacksonville and Tuscaloosa. DL offices in Opelika and Foley were slated to begin offering these services in August.

The Birmingham DL office now offers reinstatement services, in addition to providing copies of wreck reports and driver records.

A total of nine regional DL sites now offers these services throughout the state, in addition to DL headquarters in Montgomery.

"This is a win-win improvement that increases efficiency for the department and provides more convenient service to the public."

Maj. Roscoe Howell

Trooper SWAT Teams Hone Skills in Trials, Participate in National SWAT Competition

Training and competition are important components in sharpening the specialized skills required of SWAT teams, and Alabama's state troopers aren't about to be left behind. This year already, DPS's SWAT teams have taken part in the first-ever trooper SWAT trials in Clay County, and Team 4 proudly represented DPS at the National Police Week SWAT Competition in Florida.

Both events stressed team-building, leadership and individual effort, according to Lt. Robert Goodner, DPS SWAT coordinator. "The trials and the competition are both positive, team-building events that have



State trooper SWAT teams 2, 3 and 4 during trials held earlier this year in Clay County.

helped hone our SWAT skills and effectiveness," he said.

The trials, initiated this year and planned as a continuing annual event, featured a handgun stress course, land navigation, first aid, and a 2.2-mile rifle cross-country stress course.

Capturing the individual "Warrior" award was Cpl. Clay Barnes of Team 3, while Team 2 claimed the overall team award.

Team 4 represented Public Safety's first entry in national SWAT competition, finishing

solidly in the middle among the 14 teams participating. Competing were Sgt. Marty Griffin, Tpr. Steve Ridenour, Tpr. Derek Gessner, Tpr. Scott Lee, Tpr. Jackie Hornsby, Tpr. Matt Kennedy and Tpr. Ed Bennett.

The competition, hosted by the U.S. Air Force 16th Security Forces Squadron at Hurlburt Field, Fla., featured building clearing, team handgun, sniper, water rescue, an obstacle course, and paint ball.

Goodner commended team members, who participated at their own expense, for "their efforts and positive reflection on our department."

New DPS 'Show Car' Wows School Children

"They think it's cool," is how Tpr. Donald Frazier describes the way children react to Public Safety's new "show car." "And if I can get their attention with the car, I can keep their attention when we get down to business."

Frazier's "business" is safety education, and he welcomes the specially equipped trooper car to help educate children about highway and traffic safety.

The Ford Crown Victoria, for-

merly a blue-and-gray patrol car, now sports customized paint and tinting; an entertainment system with special sound system, DVD player, CD and multiple displays; and fully customized special lighting.

"It's clearly still a trooper car, but it's an attention-getter to expand our safety message to Alabama's children," said Col. Mike Coppage.

Coppage credits Cpl. Damon Summers with initiating the pro-



ject and the Service Division for their work on the car. DPS also thanks the following sponsors: Jimmy's Car Stereo, Sony Mobile Electronics, Monroe Distributing Company, Emergency

Lighting by Haynes, Whelen, Show-Me, Quality Glass Tinting, Image 1 Digital Graphics, Good-Year Tire and Rubber Company, and Pro Color.

Congratulations!

DPS Welcomes the Members of Class 2003-A as Alabama's Newest State Troopers



Lt. Gov. Lucy Baxley poses with members of State Trooper Class 2003-A. Baxley met and spoke with class members prior to their graduation July 10 at the Davis Theater in Montgomery.

The Blue Light is pleased to reprint in their entirety Attorney General Bill Pryor's remarks in addressing graduation ceremonies for Alabama State Trooper Class 2003-A.

It is an honor to address you today, as the chief law enforcement officer of Alabama, with a deep and abiding respect for the Department of Public Safety. I appreciate the outstanding leadership of Colonel Coppage and the dedication to duty of all of the officers throughout the ranks of this Department. A State Trooper graduation is always a cause for celebration, especially now as Alabama so desperately needs more officers to perform the work of this understaffed and underfunded department. Today, there is a real crisis in the Alabama criminal justice system, with urgent needs for more funding of the Department of Corrections, the Department of Forensic Sciences, and other agencies. It would be easy to paint a grim picture, but history gives us cause for hope. As an optimist, I always prefer the message of hope.

In his 1934 campaign for a second term as governor, Bibb Graves promised to create the Alabama Highway Patrol, which we now call the Department of

Public Safety. Governor Graves had been a close observer of the fine work of the two highway officers, Bill Moody and C. M. Thorsen, who were responsible for enforcing all highway and carrier laws throughout the State. Although ten more officers were added to the ranks of Officers Moody and Thorsen, Governor Graves recognized the physical impossibility of their tasks and the need for a state-wide agency. On December 5, 1935, Governor Graves fulfilled his campaign promise with the creation of the Alabama Highway Patrol.

That small beginning for this Department should give us hope as we confront the challenges that confront both this Department and the rest of the criminal justice system. Those challenges are real, however.

Alabama needs 574 troopers on the road to provide adequate public safety, but we have only about 319 road troopers. We have fewer troopers per capita than any surrounding state. Mississippi, which has 1.6 million fewer citizens, has over 200 more troop-

ers patrolling its highways than does Alabama.

Our crime labs at the Department of Forensic Sciences are also understaffed and underfunded. This problem delays justice. The simplest drug test can take as little as fifteen minutes to perform, but it takes our crime labs from four to six months to get it done. DNA tests can take two years.

Our prison system is under two court orders as we house twice as many inmates as our prisons were designed to incarcerate. We are now shipping prisoners to out-of-state facilities run by private corporations, because our prisons have no more room. We also have too few correctional officers as we spend fewer dol-

lars per inmate than any other state in the Nation.

As a longtime supporter of limited government and low taxes, I strongly support Governor Riley's plan to increase the funding for this Department



Pryor addresses state trooper graduates, guests.

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Graduation images, clockwise from right: Col. Mike Coppage, Lt. Col. John Fisher and Maj. Patrick Manning enjoy reception prior to graduation; members of the State Trooper Honor Guard post the colors as graduation ceremony begins; Coppage presents graduation certificate to Justin G. Jones as Fisher and Attorney General Bill Pryor look on; James Bradford presents class plaque to Capt. David Lashley during ceremony.



Pryor, continued from page 6

and the entire criminal justice system. It is long overdue. Law enforcement is the first and most essential responsibility of our state government. It is not something we can afford to neglect any longer.

I congratulate this class of graduates of the Trooper Academy. You are a select group. You have endured over 900 hours of training over twenty-two weeks. When you started, there were forty-four members of your class. Today, you twenty-six graduates have proved yourselves and your dedication to duty.

Thank you for choosing public service. There are sometimes more lucrative and less stressful alternatives in our free market. In the years ahead, you and your family will be called upon to make sacrifices, but your calling is noble.

You will be called peace officers, because your responsibility is to protect the peace and security of Alabama. You have the high honor of upholding the rule of law, which protects our freedom. It is my privilege to be your partner in that cause.

Each of us watched almost two years ago on September 11, 2001, as the firefighters, police officers, and various law enforcement officers of New York, who were simply doing their jobs to save lives at the risk of their own, marched into the devastation of the World Trade Center. We watched as the men and women who have dedicated their lives to serve our nation in our Armed Forces were attacked in the very building that houses our central military command on the fiftieth anniversary of its construction. Our disbelief quickly turned to awe

and horror as we realized how many were lost. We now have an abiding gratitude and admiration for the boundless brav-

"You have the high honor of upholding the rule of law, which protects our freedom.

It is my privilege to be your partner in that cause."
Attorney General Bill Pryor

ery and valor of our comrades in making this ultimate sacrifice.

As the bright light of America's liberty shines throughout the world, those individuals who hate freedom and democracy have targeted us for attack where we never dreamed they would – on our own soil. Where they thought they would create havoc, they have created strength and unity of a kind

that has been unseen for decades. Americans are resolute in our fight for freedom and justice, and for those liberties on which this great nation was founded. The greatest thanks we can give to our fallen heroes, and the greatest hope we can continue to give to those individuals oppressed and living without freedom, is to honor those who every day protect all of our citizens.

We saw the promise of America in 2001 in the response to the attack of September 11. We see the promise of America now as we continue to fight and win the war on terrorism to protect our homeland. And we see the promise of America here in our state when we witness your dedication and service to the safety and security of our citizens.

Congratulations and God Bless you.

Working for You, Alabama!

'Thanks to My Friends'

"I would like to thank all my friends with the Department of Public Safety, both active and retired, who visited me in the hospital or at home, sent cards and letters or telephoned during my recent open-heart surgery. I am proud to have been a part of such a fine organization. Thanks again for your thoughtfulness."

Capt. Fred Patterson, retired

HIDTA Taps Hallford

With the appointment of ABI Chief Maj. Ken Hallford, the Gulf Coast HIDTA has named its first Alabama chairman. Hallford completes the unexpired term of a Customs official this year and will serve as chairman through 2004. The Gulf Coast HIDTA includes Mississippi, Louisiana and Alabama.

Hallford said he welcomes his new role with HIDTA and counts among early accomplishments the designation of the Huntsville HIDTA in north Alabama.

'Hard Hats' Beef Up Enforcement

Blue jeans and hard hats aren't the usual uniform for a state trooper, unless the trooper is part of "Operation Hard Hat," a new construction zone safety program implemented this summer by DPS and the Alabama Department of Transportation.

Troopers posing as construction workers will use new laser speed detection devices, purchased by ALDOT, to identify speeding motorists. The devices, either hand-held or mounted on tripods to resemble surveying equipment, can't be picked up by radar detectors. Once the trooper operating the laser device records a speed violation, he will radio the vehicle's description to a trooper in a patrol vehicle to make the traffic stop.

'Rosie' on Job for Highway Patrol

Beach-bound motorists this summer have a chance to meet Rosie, the mannequin star of Highway Patrol's new traffic safety program, "Rosie Roulette." In her trooper uniform and parked beside the road in her patrol vehicle, Rosie is used in targeted



Fitness Matters

Forty-four stalwart DPS staff members, led by Col. Mike Coppage, took part in this year's National Employee Health and Fitness Day Walk in Montgomery. The group (pictured above) joined walkers in the one-mile route — two laps around the Capitol — and took part in blood pressure checks and osteoporosis screenings.

Kudos to all who hiked in the heat, and a special thanks to Nicole Johnson of Personnel for coordinating DPS's participation.

areas to slow down traffic and increase trooper visibility.

Although Rosie's distinctive long neck and rigid posture are just a couple of features that help distinguish her from the real thing, speeding motorists can't readily tell the difference and choose to slow down, rather than risk arrest.

Alabama Getting in the 'Click'

State troopers joined law enforcement officers throughout the state in this year's Click It or Ticket campaign, taking part in 1,463 patrols and checkpoints and writing 14,061 safety belt citations.

Although CIOT is specifically designed to increase child restraint usage, Col. Mike Coppage also touted the program as an "effective crime-fighting tool." The checkpoints also netted 671 DUI arrests, 500 felony arrests, 351 drug arrests and 316 fugitives apprehended.

CIOT is a partnership among Gov. Bob Riley, the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs, DPS, the National

Highway Traffic Safety Administration, the Regional Community Traffic Safety Programs, and municipal and county law enforcement agencies.

Tributes to Fallen Officers

The National Law Enforcement Memorial Fund includes on its Web site special tributes to honor our nation's fallen law enforcement officers. Go to www.nleomf.com to read the remarkable stories of these officers and the tributes written in their memory.

NLEMF works to generate public support for law enforcement by commemorating the service and sacrifice of law enforcement officers.

'Routine Stop' Far from Routine

After stopping a vehicle for failure to signal a lane change on U.S. 72 in Lauderdale County, Tpr. Beck Stults asked the driver to step back to his patrol car. During a pat-

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Graduated Driver Licensing

Alabama Learning to Comply with, Enforce New Requirements Aimed at Reducing Deaths, Injuries

Immaturity, inexperience and high-risk driving exposure. These are the primary reasons teen-age drivers are involved in three times as many fatal crashes as all other drivers, based on miles driven.

They're also the problems that graduated driver licensing programs seek to correct by better preparing young drivers to drive safely.

In Alabama, teen-agers, their parents, and law enforcement and licensing officials are learning the provisions of the state's new graduated driver licensing law, which became effective Oct. 1, 2002.

Through voluntary compliance and enforcement, the state hopes to achieve benefits similar to those in Florida, Michigan, North Carolina, Ohio, California, Oregon and other states.

And what are the benefits? Fewer injuries, fatalities and crashes involving teen-age drivers.

"That's our goal in Alabama," according to Maj. Charles Andrews. "Graduated driver licensing is designed to give more experience to younger drivers in a more supervised, controlled environment."

The concept works through a

tiered system that helps teen-age drivers develop the skills and judgment they need to drive safely.

Among those most familiar with Alabama's law is Missy Moore of Information Services, who has programmed the law's provisions into the state's driver licensing system. Moore provides the following primer for

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The Gift of Life

Public Safety employees in Montgomery responded this summer to The American Red Cross's urgent need for blood donations. Forty-four DPS staff members signed up to donate the gift of life as part of the state employees' blood drive at headquarters.

Thanks to all who donated, including Randy Aldridge and Terry Nichols shown in this photo, and to Nicole Johnson of Personnel for organizing DPS's participation. Johnson said it's DPS's goal to increase the number of donations during the next blood drive, scheduled for December.

Routine, *continued from page 8*

down check for weapons, Stults recovered a pocketknife in the subject's front pocket and felt an object in his waistband. The subject began to fight Stults, who brought the subject under control and effected the arrest after about five minutes. Stults sustained an injury under his left eye, and the subject received an injury to his forehead.

In the meantime, a passing motorist called 911 to report a trooper was being assaulted, and additional troopers responded, along with officers from the Lauderdale County Sheriff's Office and the Rogersville and Killen police departments.

The subject's waistband was found to contain plastic bags with a quarter pound of marijuana and about 5.6 grams of crack. He was charged with resisting arrest, assault, possession of marijuana and possession of a controlled substance.

Safety in Numbers

Sixty-eight state troopers have recorded a cumulative total of more than 530 years of driving safely on the job. DPS recognized these troopers recently by honoring their achievements with the department's Safe Driving Award.

Leading the way were Lt. Loyd Arrington with 35 years and Tpr. Freddie R. Reeves with 30 years. Congratulations to all!

Got News?

It's easy to share information for *The Blue Light*. Just contact your division's contributing editor, your area Public Information/Education officer, send an e-mail to mearnhardt@dps.state.al.us, or call PI/E at 334-242-4445.

People You Know

April-June 2003

Appointments

Dewania Jackson	04/07/03	PCO I	Montgomery
Darlene Jones	04/05/03	ASA III	Lieutenant Colonel's Office
Joseph A. Stewart	04/07/03	ESO	Governor's Mansion
Ricky D. Timbers	04/07/03	PCO I	Dothan
Stephanie Wright	04/07/03	PCO I	Birmingham
Jo Angelyn Marzano	04/19/03	IT Systems Spec. Assoc.	Information Services
Brenda S. Williams	05/17/03	ASA I	Public Information/Education
Kasi R. Woodruff	05/17/03	ASA I	Chief Examiner's Office
Ruby D. Salter	06/16/03	ASA	Evergreen HP
Meritha Grant	06/28/03	Data Entry Operator	Data Processing
Lachrisa Henderson	06/30/03	PCO I	Huntsville
Lisa Palmer	06/30/03	PCO I	Huntsville
Lela Person	06/28/03	Data Entry Operator	Data Processing
Carolyn Powers	06/30/03	ASA I	Tuscaloosa HP
Pamela Smith	06/28/03	Data Entry Operator	Data Processing

Promotions

Mark A. Bammann	04/05/03	PCO II	Decatur
Darryl E. Moore	05/03/03	Corporal	ACJTC
Denise N. Allison	05/17/03	DL Specialist	Mobile
Sharon P. Dees	05/17/03	DL Specialist	Mobile
Regina G. Fincher	05/17/03	DL Specialist	Jacksonville
Mary Ann Howard	05/17/03	DL Specialist	Quad Cities
Marica L. Howze	05/17/03	DL Specialist	Huntsville
Dorita L. Kelley	05/17/03	DL Specialist	Jacksonville
Jennifer A. Stiles	05/17/03	DL Specialist	Huntsville
Becky J. Williams	05/17/03	DL Specialist	Opelika
Valeria Y. Jernigan	05/31/03	DL Specialist	Reinstatement
Carol J. Mensie	05/31/03	DL Specialist	Reinstatement
Cassandra N. Peacock	05/31/03	ASA II	Mobile HP
Lisa M. Reeves	05/31/03	PCO I	Mobile
Denise L. Foreman	06/14/03	DL Specialist	Tuscaloosa
Regina K. Hardy	06/14/03	DL Specialist	Birmingham
Susan W. Heaton	06/14/03	DL Specialist	Tuscaloosa
Amy J. Kowal	06/14/03	PCO II	Decatur
Jane E. Langley	06/14/03	Accounting Manager	Financial Services
Carolyn D. Pace	06/14/03	DL Specialist	Birmingham
Richard A. Ward	06/14/03	Corporal	Selma
Gloria J. Wilson	06/14/03	ASA II	Jacksonville HP

Resignations

Thomas A. Bryant	04/04/03	Prop. Invent. Officer	Supply
Linda H. Faulk	04/04/03	ASA I	Safety
Charles J. Greene	04/04/03	ASA I	Microfilm
C. L. Trimmier	04/04/03	PCO I	Birmingham
Amanda R. Hudgpeth	04/18/03	PCO I	Opelika
Larry R. Ellison	05/02/03	PCO I	Tuscaloosa
Mary L. Lenyo	05/03/03	ASA II	Medical
Merinda McFeley	04/18/03	Service Patrol Operator	Birmingham

Resignations, continued

Roy L. Sanderson	05/02/03	Sergeant	Hamilton HP
Annie T. Moss	05/09/03	ASA I	Medical
Danyale N. Bumpers	05/30/03	Data Entry Operator	Data Processing
Jamie M. Fells	06/04/03	Data Entry Operator	Data Processing
Jan C. Crawford	06/13/03	Data Entry Operator	Data Processing
Charemon C. Gentry	05/23/03	PCO I	Mobile
Carina Graham	06/13/03	Account Clerk	Financial Services
Glenda M. Parker	06/06/03	DL Examiner I	Birmingham
Clayton R. Barnes	06/20/03	Corporal	Montgomery HP
Shawn Stewart	06/27/03	DL Examiner	Montgomery
Richard L. Stidham	06/27/03	Trooper Trainee	ACJTC
Robert D. Sumlin	06/20/03	PCO I	Mobile

Retirements

Rector Johnson Jr.	04/30/03	Captain	Quad Cities HP
Andre L. Reid	04/30/03	Trooper	Executive Security
Dora M. Moore	05/30/03	ASA II	Public Information/Education

Transfers

		<i>From</i>	<i>To</i>
Tpr. Gabriel B. Stults	04/19/03	Colbert County HP	Lauderdale County HP
Tpr. R. C. Heeschen	05/31/03	Decatur HP	ABI EOD
Tpr. Richard Itter	05/03/03	Franklin County HP	Colbert County HP
Tpr. Scott Thompson	05/31/03	Montgomery ABI	Madison County ABI
Tpr. Kevin Cole	06/14/03	Selma HP	Montgomery HP
Tpr. Gregory Grimes	06/14/03	ACJTC	DL Hearing/Fraud
Tpr. Eugene Mattox	06/14/03	Opelika HP	ABI EOD

Graduated Driver Licensing, continued from page 9

DPS personnel familiarizing themselves with the law:

- There is nothing on the face of an Alabama license to indicate the driver is subject to graduated driver license restrictions. Moore's advice to troopers: Conduct a DL check to find out if the license is restricted under GDL.
- Any teen-ager licensed prior to Oct. 1, 2002, is "grandfathered" and exempt from the law. This includes those who were issued a learner's permit or motorcycle license prior to Oct. 1, 2002.
- Also exempt are teen-agers who have been legally relieved of status as a minor and those 16 or older who are married or the head of household.

- All other teen-agers younger than 18 are subject to the law's provisions.

- All teen-age drivers covered by GDL must have a learner's permit for at least six months.

- To be eligible for an unrestricted license, a driver must be 17 and have received no convictions for moving violations for at least six months.

- A 15-year-old with a learner's permit may drive when accompanied in the front seat by a parent, legal guardian, driving instructor or any other licensed driver age 21 or older.

- Two moving violation convictions, or any ticket with four or more points, warrant an automatic 60-day suspension for

teen-agers with a restricted license.

- Teen-agers with a restricted license may not have more than four occupants in the vehicle, including a parent or legal guardian.

- Teen-agers with a restricted license may not operate a vehicle between midnight and 6 a.m. unless:

- Accompanied by a parent or legal guardian;
- Accompanied by a licensed driver age 21 or older, with the consent of the licensee's parent or legal guardian;
- Driving to or from work;
- Driving to or from a school- or religious-sponsored event;

- Driving due to a medical, fire or law enforcement-related emergency.

Moore notes that violation of the GDL restrictions is a secondary offense. A teen-ager who has violated these restrictions may be cited only after being stopped and cited for a separate violation of the law. To date, no citations for GDL violations have been reported to DPS.

Andrews said DPS will work with the legislature to remedy a discrepancy between the graduated driver licensing law and 32-6-8(a), which addresses who may accompany teen-age drivers.



Alabama Department of Public Safety

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Tommy Giles, Photography

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Martha Earnhardt

WE'RE ON THE WEB!
DPS.STATE.AL.US

Check It Out!

DPS has a great new public Web site, dps.state.al.us, that should be at the top of your list of favorites. The site's been updated to include lots of valuable new information and links, and it boasts a bold new look.

And While You're Surfing ...

DPS members don't need to miss out on their very own in-house Web site, [SafetyNet](http://safetynet.dps.state.al.us).

Go to <http://safetynet.dps.state.al.us> to look for online forms and training manuals, to check your leave status, and to find lots of other helpful resources.

Thanks to Curt Terling, Tal Kelley and all the folks in Information Services for creating and maintaining both sites!

Routine Traffic Stop Nets Alert Trooper Largest-ever Seizure of Heroin in Alabama

Alabama's state troopers scored the state's largest-ever seizure of heroin following a routine traffic stop last month on Interstate 85 in Lee County, prompting a multi-state ongoing narcotics investigation and attracting accolades from Gov. Bob Riley.

The seizure, 24 pounds of brown heroin with an estimated street value of \$4.3 million, also represents the third largest heroin seizure in the nation this year.

"I commend Alabama's state troopers, who work every day to make our state safer," Riley said. "Their work is a clear signal to all that Alabama is committed to halting the flow of illegal drugs into and through our state."

The heroin was found inside the firewall of a Chevrolet Malibu

after a trooper stopped the vehicle for a traffic violation. The vehicle was registered in Texas and, according to the driver, en route to New York City. "This could have remained nothing more than a routine traffic stop, had it not been for an on-the-ball trooper who sensed there was more there than met the eye," said Highway Patrol Sgt. Marc McHenry. Assisting were a trooper canine and Opelika police officers.

The driver, Lucia Chavez-Flores, 31, and her passenger, Maria Elena Andrade, 33, were arrested and face federal charges of heroin possession with intent to distribute. The two also may face prosecution under Alabama's "drug kingpin" law. Both are residents of Laredo, Texas, and Chavez-Flores is an illegal alien from El Salvador.

The seizure and arrests followed recent training in immigration law provided to troopers by the U.S. Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement. The four-hour sessions were designed to teach state troopers the basics of immigration law and familiarize them with a federal computer database designed to quickly check an individual's immigration status.

DPS is working with ICE and the Department of Homeland Security to finalize an agreement that would allow a select group of troopers to undergo extensive immigration and customs enforcement training and be



Trooper displays packaged heroin found in vehicle's firewall.

granted illegal alien arrest authority.

Col. Mike Coppage said the traffic stop and seizure "affirm the professionalism and training of our state troopers. This was an alert trooper who showed exceptional skill and training by looking beyond the traffic stop for criminal activity."